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NEW TEXTBOOKS FOR CLASSES 3 & 6 TO BE OUT IN APRIL, MAY: NCERT

For other classes, textbooks will only be updated and revised this year, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) said

STEPS TAKEN TO ENSURE NO GAP IN LEARNING

Director of NCERT Dinesh Prasad Saklani said a 15-day foundation course for students of class 3 and a month-long bridge programme for those from class 6 have been prepared to ensure there is no gap in learning. The NECRT's announcement comes days after the CBSE told affiliated schools to adopt new syllabi for classes 3 and 6 from the upcoming academic year

ABOUT 33 LAKH TEXTBOOKS PRINTED

- Saklani said new texts are being adopted in classes 3, 6 as they mark the start of preparatory and middle stages of schooling, respectively
- About 33 lakh updated textbooks for classes 1, 2, 7, 8, 10 and 12 have been delivered to bookshops, Saklani said. New books for class 3 and updated books for classes 4, 5, 9 and 11 will be out this month | P9

26 crore
STUDENTS ENROLLED IN 14.86 LAKH SCHOOLS IN INDIA

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

BJP WON'T WIN 200 LS SEATS, NO MODI WAVE IN K'TAKA, SAYS DKS

PURAN CHOUDHARY & RISHITA KHANNA @ Bengaluru

EXPRESS Dialogues

DEPUTY Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Wednesday predicted that BJP will not secure more than 200 seats in the Lok Sabha elections.

He was speaking at Express Dialogues — Mini Conclave held in the city. In the run-up to the last Assembly elections in the state, Shivakumar had predicted that Congress would win 141 seats and the party secured 135 seats.

"If BJP is so powerful, they would not have gone around making so many alliances. They are also not sure of winning more than 200 seats," Shivakumar said, adding that the arrest of Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal is a sign of BJP's weakness.

Speaking on I.N.D.I.A. and dodging a question on Rahul Gandhi's nomination in Wayanad against a non-BJP candidate, Shivakumar said, "It is still not decided who will be the leader of I.N.D.I.A. We believe in inclusivity. Instead of singling out and elevating any one individual as a leader, we will face whatever challenges may arise together."

Shivakumar was also confident of Congress' good show in LS elections in the state. He asserted that there is no Modi wave in Karnataka.

CONTINUED ON: P6

From left: Deputy CM DK Shivakumar speaks at the Express Dialogues – Mini Conclave in Bengaluru on Wednesday. Panelists writer Samhita Arni, political analysts Prof Sandeep Shastri, Dr Chandan Gowda and MS Murthy discuss a point. Author Dr Vikram Sampath holds the floor | VINOD KUMARY

Man slits his throat in front of K'taka CJ, judge

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

IN a shocking incident, a 51-year-old litigant attempted suicide by slitting his throat with a surgical knife in front of a division bench of the High Court of Karnataka, comprising Chief Justice NV Anjaria and Justice Dr HB Prabhakara Sastry on Wednesday.

Chinnam Srinivas from Vijayanagar in Mysuru slit his throat around 1.10pm just before the division bench rose for the day for a function in honour of Dr Sastry, who retired the same day. Soon after the incident, the access to live streaming of the court proceedings was withdrawn.

The incident shocked the judges, staff members and a few advocates who were in the court hall. Expressing concern over the incident, the judges sought to know how the man entered the court hall with the knife, which is a matter of security concern. The judges immediately summoned policemen attached to the high court security division and directed them to shift the injured man to hospital.

Srinivas had filed a cheating complaint in Mysuru after he was reportedly cheated of Rs 93 lakh by his partners in a residential apartment project. The complaint was filed against three persons, including a woman from Hyderabad. However, a single-judge bench quashed the FIR in June 2023.

Police sources said on Wednesday Srinivas allegedly carried a file related to his case to place it before the Chief Justice directly without following due procedure. He entered the court hall, went near the podium where the judges were seated and handed over the file to the staff there. When the staff sought details, he slit his throat. He is said to have undergone heart surgeries twice.

"The man, who attempted suicide, is receiving treatment at Bowring Hospital and his condition is stable," Dr Manoj Kumar, Director-cum-Dean, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Medical and Research Institution, told *TNIE*.

Wary Rahul's roadshow flagless

Thousands attend rally; Congress ally Muslim League's 'green' flags conspicuously absent

Rahul Gandhi during his roadshow in Wayanad on Wednesday | E SOMU

On one side are the forces who want to destroy the democracy and the Constitution of this country and on the other, there is a force that is protecting the Constitution and democratic nature of our count

Rahul Gandhi, Cong's Wayanad nominee

People are coming to me and saying that they never voted for that symbol (Congress party's) before the last election but they were told that he would become the prime minister. So they voted for him. But what happened?

Annie Raja, CPI candidate in Wayanad

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Kalpetta

TREADING cautiously, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi abandoned party flags of all allies as he took out a massive roadshow to the Wayanad district collectorate on Wednesday to submit his nomination papers for the Lok Sabha election. The extensive use of key ally Muslim League's green flags during his 2019 roadshow was played up by the BJP at the national level, with senior leaders including Amit Shah wondering whether Rahul was seeking votes in Pakistan, crushing the hopes of the grand old party in north India.

This time, tricoloured balloons and hats along with placards were part of the roadshow instead of flags. Rahul's sister and AICC general secretary Priyanka Gandhi, AICC general secretary (organisation) K C Venugopal, Muslim League leader Panakkad Sayyid Abbas Ali Shihab Thangal, other local leaders, and thousands of supporters accompanied him.

The absence of flags has left many tongues wagging. Even Rahul's 2019 loss in Amethi was attributed to the presence of Muslim League flags in his roadshow then. The Congress was in no mood to take any chances this time. Since it would have been counterproductive to avoid only the League flag, it was decided to abandon the use of flags altogether, including that of the Congress.

"Flags are not important in elections. Rahul Gandhi and the hand symbol are our icons," Kalpetta MLA T Siddique said. But Congress and the Muslim League will have to sweat it out to explain the action. There will be questions as to how the party will raise the issues of Muslims, when it finds even the presence of the League flag embarrassing.

Speaking at the conclusion of the roadshow, Rahul said he will be with the people of Wayanad in their fight to resolve three major issues — human-wildlife conflict, night travel ban, and lack of a medical college in the hilly district.

2-yr-old boy falls into borewell in Indi, rescue on

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Vijayapura

A two-year-old boy reportedly fell into an open borewell at Lachyan village in Indi taluk on Wednesday.

According to reports, Satwik Mujagond fell into the borewell at a farm while playing near it. An operation is on to rescue the boy. Deputy Commissioner T Bhoobalan, who visited the spot, has asked SDRF from Kalaburagi to join the operation.

Assistant Commissioner Abid Gadyal said the boy fell into the borewell around 6 pm. The boy is said to be the grandson of the farm owner.

"We sent a team of police and revenue officials, and fire services personnel to the village. Earthmovers are digging a parallel pit to rescue the boy stuck 20 ft below," he said.

According to sources, the borewell was drilled a few days ago. With no sign of water at 280 ft, the farm owner stopped drilling further and did not bother to close it.

Goa murder case: Police file 642-page chargesheet against Bengaluru CEO

NAUSHAD BIJAPUR @ Belagavi

THE Goa police filed a chargesheet against Suchana Seth, CEO of a Bengaluru-based AI start-up, before the Goa Children's Court on Wednesday in connection with the murder of her son in a hotel in Calangute.

Suchana Seth

The court will hear the case on June 14 when charges will be framed against Seth, 39, who is now in judicial custody in Goa.

Seth had allegedly killed her four-year-old son in the hotel room and was later caught by Karnataka police when she was taking the body stuffed in a suitcase to Bengaluru by a cab on January 7.

In the 642-page chargesheet, the Goa police stated that Seth's son died as a result of shock and respiratory asphyxia caused by strangulation.

The police also mentioned that a note recovered from the hotel room was written by Seth.

The chargesheet contains names of 59 witnesses, including several staff members of the hotel where Seth stayed in Goa. It also has the statements of Seth's husband, which were crucial in cracking the case.

Seth was arrested in Chitradurga on her way to Bengaluru from Goa. The police booked her under Sections 302 (murder) and 201(causing disappearance of evidence of office) of the Indian Penal Code and Section 8 of the Goa Children's Act.

VOTE CHECK

SC to list pleas on VVPAT before LS polls begin

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

THE Supreme Court on Wednesday said it will take up a batch of pleas related to EVM data cross-checking against voter-verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT) records the week after next. The petitions were supposed to come up on Wednesday but could not be listed because Justice Khanna was heading a special bench.

The pleas seek a direction to the Election Commission to count all VVPAT slips as against the current practice of verifying only five randomly selected EVMs in each assembly segment of a parliamentary constituency.

On Wednesday, senior advocate Kapil Sibal mentioned the matter before the special bench of Justices Khanna, M M Sundresh and Bela M Trivedi, requesting that the pleas may be heard next Tuesday.

Senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, also appearing in the matter, submitted before the bench that the elections are about to start and the pleas would become infructuous if the case is not heard urgently.

Justice Khanna said the court is aware of the situation and wants to speed up the hearing. However, the matter can't be listed next week due to roster issues. It will be listed the week after, he added.

On Monday, a bench of Justices B R Gavai and Sandeep Mehta had issued notice to the ECI and the Centre on another petition filed by lawyer and activist Arun Kumar Agrawal seeking 100% verification of VVPAT slips. The norm of five randomly picked EVMs to undergo VVPAT physical verification was set in April 2019, following an SC direction. Before that, only one EVM underwent the process.

VVPAT is an independent vote verification system which permits an electron to check if the vote she or he cast went to the intended candidate.

EXPRESS READ

35 kids fall ill after eating meal in Koppal

Koppal: At least 35 children fell ill after eating the midday meal in their school at Sangapur village in Koppal district on Wednesday. School staff said the children fell ill due to excess heat and not because of the food. Thirty minutes after eating, some of the students complained of stomach ache and started vomiting | P5

Delhi HC reserves order on plea by Kejriwal

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court on Wednesday reserved its verdict on a petition filed by Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal challenging his arrest by the Enforcement Directorate. Kejriwal questioned the "timing" of his arrest and said it was in contravention of the basic structure of the Constitution, including free and fair polls | P9

TAIWAN SHAKES @ 7.4

One of the buildings damaged by a powerful earthquake that shook Taiwan's Hualien County on Wednesday morning | AP | P12

STRONGEST IN 25 YRS

A 7.4 magnitude earthquake, the strongest to hit Taiwan in a quarter-century, damaged dozens of buildings and caused 24 landslides that blocked key roads leaving thousands isolated

9 PEOPLE KILLED

70 COAL MINERS TRAPPED IN TWO QUARRIES IN TAIWAN